

# Project Narrative

Issaquah Highlands – Discovery West (Blocks 25, 26, & 27)  
July 22, 2013

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This project narrative pertains to Discovery West, located on Blocks 25, 26, & 27 of the Issaquah Highlands development and is being provided per the requirements of the Site Development Permit Application. The intent is to illustrate compliance of the proposed site development with the Issaquah Highlands Urban Design Guidelines and the Sidewalk Use and Design Standards and Guidelines. Following the organization of the Urban Design Guidelines, this narrative addresses the six main sections of the guidelines separately. The sections include Circulation, Neighborhood, Overlay District, Social Gathering Places, Limited Use Open Space and Park, and the Sustainable Building Technology Guidelines. Blocks 25, 26, and 27 are located to the west across Highlands Dr. NE from Discovery Heights Phase I and II.

## Proposed Uses & Areas:

### Multifamily Residential, Parks and Trails, Surface Parking

The proposed use for this parcel is 209 units of multifamily rental housing, with a distribution of roughly 28% 1-bedroom, 46% 2-bedroom and 26% 3-bedroom units. Most units are flats, but the project also includes 9 carriage house units (townhomes above a garage). The ground floor of Building F includes a 7,600 sf community/amenity area which incorporates management and leasing offices, and tenant amenities. The amenities currently include a pool and spa, changing rooms / restrooms, a fitness room, a children's play room, a conference room and a party/games room. Building areas are approximate at this time pending final building design, but the approximate lot coverage for buildings is 55,321 sf, with an overall floor area of approximately 209,715 sf. The site plan is organized around a public pedestrian trail which is integral to the site's pedestrian circulation and open space system. The public trail is also a view corridor that opens to the east, establishing a visual and walkable connection to the rest of the Issaquah Highlands community. Parking for 337 vehicles is distributed throughout the site, with 228 as surface stalls, 85 within the Building A garage, 24 stalls in the carriage units and 2 centrally located loading spaces.

## Guideline Sections:

### Circulation

Blocks 25, 26, & 27 are bounded by Highlands Drive NE to the east, NE 8<sup>th</sup> St. to the west, NE Discovery Drive to the north, and Proliance Highlands Surgery Center to the south. A steep hillside and pedestrian trails border the east side of the site. A driveway off of NE 8<sup>th</sup> St. will serve as the primary vehicular entrance to the project. The main entry will incorporate monument signage and architectural features to call attention to the "front door" of the project. The secondary vehicular entrance to the project is an access driveway shared with Proliance, to the south. Interior vehicle circulation will be achieved using parking drive aisles and will meet the required parking lot standards.

For pedestrians, a network of sidewalks and trails connect all housing units to each other, shared amenities in Building F, open space, and the neighborhood. The public pedestrian trail begins at the pedestrian bridge crossing over Highlands Drive NE, intersects the Issaquah Highlands pedestrian trail system, and climbs the slope via a public stair. The trail continues through the site on a public trail easement that is adjacent to a view overlook, open lawn, and picnic area. The trail meets NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street at a new mid-block crossing, which will serve as a pedestrian connection to future development across NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street as well as Swedish Medical Center. The trail is designed to meet the requirements of a Neighborhood Trail, with a 16' corridor as described in Appendix T. A neighborhood walk is proposed on the east edge of the property and runs north to

south, connecting Discovery Drive to the path intersection of the public pedestrian trail and finally to a community garden and walking path that leads to the Swedish Medical Center.



Fig. 1. Trail precedent – existing Issaquah Highlands between residential buildings, similar to proposed trail through Blocks 25-26-27.



Fig. 2. Example of a neighborhood trail similar to the connection on the east slope area.

### **Neighborhood – Traditional Townscape**

Blocks 25, 26, & 27 are designed to comply with the Traditional Townscape neighborhood type. All buildings lining NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street are located so that residential stoops along the street encourage engagement between residents and the rest of the neighborhood. Building F houses a leasing/management office and community amenities at its north end which will serve the residents of the housing complex only. This part of the building will reinforce the look and feel of a traditional town center streetscape and serve as a focal point for views within the site. Buildings will be embellished with upper level balconies and a variety of window sizes.



Fig. 3. Potential storefront character for management office and community center at the base of Building F.

The public pedestrian trail corridor intersects with NE 8<sup>th</sup> St. at the main entrance to Building F. Pedestrian and vehicular routes to the rest of the site also intersect here. These factors, combined with Building F's ground-level uses, taller height, and location at the main auto court gives it an emphasis that compliments the outdoor amenities at the east end of the public pedestrian trail.

The development of the west side of NE 8<sup>th</sup> St. as it stands already mimics a traditional town street as closely as possible. It has existing on-street parallel parking, 4'x6' planting tree pits, pedestrian pole street lighting, street trees, and 10' foot sidewalks. To create a transition from public sidewalk to private home, orderly arrangements of hardy, evergreen shrubs and groundcovers will be planted along the base of buildings where appropriate.

Driveway and curb cuts are minimized along NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street, making it pedestrian-friendly. Garage entries are located in the interior of the site, away from the street. Carriage home buildings and regularly-spaced tree islands break the parking field into smaller, more attractive spaces. The large interior planting islands will serve as bioretention areas, which offer a major ecological benefit as well as provide visual relief from paved parking surfaces.

#### **Overlay Guidelines – Multi-Family District**

This project is also a prime example of a Multi-Family District. The Multi-Family District Overlay contains site plan and character goals that are similar to the Cottage Lane Neighborhood. Rather than repeat each aspect in detail, the list below summarizes qualities that are shared by both categories and provided within the development:

- Housing gathered around a shared recreation space
- Courtyards and parks within easy view of units
- Common spaces should include barbeque and picnic areas, small conversation areas
- Hardy planting around buildings and lining circulation routes

Multi-family guidelines specify that new buildings at the edge of projects should be compatible with surrounding neighborhoods, especially in terms of height and scale. Blocks 25, 26, & 27 are adjacent to currently undeveloped parcels, Proliance Highlands Surgery Center and Swedish Medical Center. The intent in the proposed development is to introduce a more urban character for buildings A and F and the site that is compatible with the variety of adjacent uses, yet embraces a warmth and pedestrian scale appropriate for residences.

There will be trash rooms in Buildings A and F. The trash room in Building A is located north of the elevators, on the parking level. The trash room in Building F is located south of the elevators, on the first floor. Both trash rooms will have direct access to the exterior. Chutes will bring waste, recycling and yard waste to dumpsters that will be emptied numerous times per week (see calculations below).

The carriage homes will have two banks of six totes at each cluster of 2 buildings; one north and one south, that will be placed in two small enclosures. They will be accessed through the path that runs north / south on the east side of the townhomes. These will be located and designed with the Building and Landscape Utility Permits.



Fig. 4. Trash enclosures.



Fig. 5. Covered kiosk is a place to run into neighbors while picking-up the mail.

A large compactor and yard waste trash enclosure is proposed to the SE corner of the property, with two 25cy compactors - one for recycling and one for waste. There will also be an enclosed area for 3x 3cy containers for compostable waste. The project will generate an estimated maximum of 16.4 CY of food waste per week, which will be distributed between (4) 50-gallon totes and (2) 3CY containers located in trash rooms within each building and delivered to the trash enclosure at the southeast corner of the site, emptied once per week. Residents will



generate a maximum of 24.3 CY recycling materials per week, which needs to be distributed among (4) 50-gallon totes and (2) 3 CY bins and delivered to the 25 CY compactor, emptied once every 3 weeks. They will also generate a maximum of 24.3 CY of garbage per week, to be distributed among (4) 50-gallon totes and (2) 3 CY bins and delivered to the 25 CY compactor, emptied once every 3 weeks.

Resident mailboxes will be split between two locations, on the east side of buildings A and F. The mailbox kiosks are located at secondary building entrances and close to pedestrian circulation routes to ease resident access.

### **Social Gathering Places Guidelines**

Most of the social gathering areas within the project are located along the public pedestrian trail. Starting west, a small terrace with moveable seating, seatwalls, and an outdoor fireplace serve to welcome residents and visitors to the site and act as an outdoor extension of the community amenities adjacently located in Building F. It will have an urban feel, much like the terrace of a restaurant. The trail then crosses the drive aisle and skirts an open lawn with amphitheater seating, a bocce court, and a picnic/barbeque area. The trail then crosses a new neighborhood walk and terminates at a view overlook with seatwalls and benches. Another gathering area is located on the east side of building F. It is comprised of a small 'sunken' plaza with amphitheater seating, tables and chairs adjacent to the fitness room and a children's play room. Immediately to the south is an entry shelter that houses a mail kiosk and bike racks. The variety of spaces created by the design allows for large and small group configurations. Paving will vary and reflect the character that each space creates. Planting will adhere to Traditional Townscape standards, featuring orderly arrangements of hardy evergreen shrubs, trees and groundcovers.



Fig. 6. Bocce court for family games



Fig. 7. Fireplace at Terrace



Fig. 8. Example of seat walls that will be part of the park, terraces and hillclimb walkways throughout the project.



Fig. 9. Example of a covered gathering space



Fig. 10 Building Façade character at pool .



Fig. 11. Pool at phase 1.

### **Limited Use Open Space and Park Guidelines**

The project contains two Limited Use open spaces. Both of these spaces are connected to the rest of the site and the neighborhood by pedestrian trails. A dog run is located at the northeast corner of the site. The space will feature open wood-chipped areas, pet-waste stations, human- and pet- water fountains, pet and human oriented furnishings, and be fully fenced with double-gated entries. At the southeast corner of the site, a fenced community garden with plots and a garden shed will provide residents with an opportunity to grow their own food and flowers. The garden will also have a small seating area for rest and social interaction among residents.



Fig. 12. Community Garden



Fig. 13. Pet Area

### **Sustainable Building Technology Guidelines**

The project contributes to the overall sustainable design goals of Issaquah Highlands by providing housing within walking distance of nearby amenities. The pedestrian pathways throughout the site will enhance residents' access to amenities such as groceries, restaurants, and Park and Ride facilities will greatly reduce the number of automobile trips that would otherwise occur. The inviting sidewalk and trail network throughout Issaquah Highlands will encourage residents to leave their automobile at home and walk to the neighborhood pedestrian based town center.

The project will meet strict state and local codes for site, storm water, building energy, recycling construction practices, tenant education and indoor air quality as well as address the Built Green checklist as a required four star project.

The project will strive to reduce water consumption and to use water wisely. The majority of the planting palette is drought-tolerant after establishment with a few exceptions. Furthermore, the

irrigation design will use drip irrigation. The specified drip irrigation system will be subsurface to help localize irrigation to the root zones of the plants. This reduces evapotranspiration by keeping the water unexposed to sun and wind. The check valves allow the drippers to turn on and off at the same time, while delivering the same amount of water at each emitter to ensure even coverage. Plantings will be grouped by water needs, ensuring that plants that need less water are not over irrigated.

The proposed water regimen is as follows:

- During the Establishment Period (2 years): water sufficient to assure plant establishment and not to exceed  $\frac{1}{4}$ " of water every 3 days shall be applied.
- During the Long-term Period (2+ years): Watering regime for after the establishment period (Long-term period) is limited to May - October. Water sufficient to maintain plant cover and not to exceed  $\frac{1}{2}$ " of water once every 10 days shall be applied.